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TO:	PTO	FAX NO.:	571-273-8300
FROM:	Kenneth N. Nigon	ADMIN. ASST.:	Edna Schmittinger
APPLN. NO.:	09/640,103	ATTY. DOCKET NO.:	FKC-100US
TITLE OF APPLN.: ELECTRONIC MESSAGE PROCESSING			
FILING DATE:	August 15, 2000	ART UNIT:	2443
FIRST INVENTOR:	Patrick McErlean	CONF. NO.:	1503
TITLE OF DOCUMENT (and List of Attachments): Fee Transmittal			
Appeal Brief			
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COMMENTS

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 Fees pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (H.R. 4818).

FEE TRANSMITTAL For FY 2008

☐ Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27

TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT (\$)

Complete if Known

Application Number	09/640,103
Filing Date	August 15, 2000
First Named Inventor	Patrick McErlan
Examiner Name	Alina A. Boutah
Art Unit	2443
Attorney Docket No.	FKC-100US

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1. BASIC FILING, SEARCH, AND EXAMINATION FEES

Application Type	FILING FEES		SEARCH FEES		EXAMINATION FEES		Fees Paid (\$)
	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	
Utility	330	165	540	270	220	110	—
Design	220	110	100	50	140	70	—
Plant	220	110	330	165	170	85	—
Reissue	330	165	540	270	650	325	—
Provisional	220	110	0	0	0	0	—

2. EXCESS CLAIM FEES

Fee Description	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fee (\$)
Each claim over 20 (including Reissues)	52	26
Each independent claim over 3 (including Reissues)	220	110
Multiple dependent claims	390	195

Total Claims	Extra Claims	Fee (\$)	Fee Paid (\$)	Multiple Dependent Claims	Fee (\$)	Fee Paid (\$)
- 20 or HP =	x	=				
HP = highest number of total claims paid for, if greater than 20						
Indep. Claims	Extra Claims	Fee (\$)	Fee Paid (\$)			
- 3 or HP =	x	=				
HP = highest number of independent claims paid for, if greater than 3						

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If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper (excluding electronically filed sequence or computer listings under 37 CFR 1.52(e)), the application size fee due is \$270 (\$135 for small entity) for each 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(3) and 37 CFR 1.16(e).

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No: 09/640,103
Applicant: Patrick McErlean
Filed: August 15, 2000
Title: ELECTRONIC MESSAGE PROCESSING
TC/A.U.: 2443
Examiner: Alina A. Boutah
Confirmation No.: 1503
Notice of Appeal Filed: December 10, 2008
Docket No.: FKC-100US

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

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Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

S I R :

Appellants hereby request consideration and reversal of the Non-Final Rejection dated November 14, 2008, of claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16.

This Brief is presented in the format required by 37 C.F.R. § 41.37, in order to facilitate review by the Board. In compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(a)(1), this Brief is being filed within the time allowed for response to the action from which the Appeal was taken or within two months from the date of the Notice of Appeal, whichever is later.

The fees for filing a Brief in support of an Appeal under 37 C.F.R. § 41.20(b)(2) have been previously paid. Any difference between the current fee and the amount previously paid required in connection with the filing of this Brief, are provided herewith.

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real Party In Interest in this matter is Art Technology Group, Inc. Art Technology Group, Inc. purchased Primus Knowledge Solutions, Inc. and Primus

01/27/2009 VRUI11 00000032 09640103

01 FC:2402

270.00 OP

Adjustment date: 01/27/2009 VRUI11
03/31/2008 HDESTA1 00000057 09640103
02 FC:2402 -255.00 OP

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Knowledge Solutions, Inc. purchased Amacis Group Limited. Amacis Group Limited has rights by virtue of an assignment recorded on August 15, 2000, at Reel/Frame 011047/0568.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no related appeals or interferences known to Appellant, Appellant's legal representative, or Assignee which may be related to, be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending Appeal.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 are pending in this application and stand rejected. Claims 8 and 15 have been canceled. Claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 are appealed. Of those claims currently under appeal, claims 1, 9, 14 and 16 are independent.

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

The present application is under non-final rejection. Appellant elected not to submit a Response. Instead, Appellant filed Request for Reinstatement of Appeal and a Notice of Appeal on December 10, 2008. The present application has been rejected eight times. Prior to the present rejection, Appellant filed an Amendment, a Request for Reconsideration, an Amendment after Final Rejection, a Request for Continuing Examination, a Request for Reconsideration, an Amendment, an Appeal Brief and an Amendment during prosecution. All of the Amendments were entered.

V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 are appealed. The claimed invention is directed to a novel electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages. As background, the electronic message processing system relates to the application of classification rules to electronic messages in order that the messages can be classified into one or more categories. A classification module according to the subject invention applies classification rules, where the classification rules are arranged into rule sets. The rule sets are applied to the message content in accordance with a hierarchical structure such that the result of applying one rules set

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to the message content determines which further rule set is next applied. This electronic message processing system may provide advantages such as: a) individual rule sets can be maintained/updated independently of the other rule sets; and b) not all classification rules need be applied to all messages. The first of these advantages, allows, for example, a number of different branches/departments of a large distributed organization to maintain their own rule set(s) without affecting the rule sets of others, and irrespective of the internal technology with which each rule set is used.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §41.37(c)(1)(v), a concise explanation of the subject matter defined in the independent claim 1 under appeal is set forth below. Citations to the application's support for the claimed subject matter are made by reference to numbered page and line numbers (e.g. *page 8, line 6*) of Appellant's specification (AS) as originally filed (e.g., *AS p. 8, line 6*) as well as corresponding figures (*Figs.*).

Claim 1

Independent claim 1 recites an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages (*AS page 8, lines 21-24; and Figs. 1 and 2*), the system comprising: means for storing a plurality of classification rules (*AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22; and page 17, lines 21-26*); at least one text analyzer (*AS page 9, line 28-page 10, line 6; and Fig. 2*); a respective rule engine associated with the at least one text analyzer and with the rule storage means (*AS page 12, lines 27-32*), the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine being co-operable to apply at least one classification rule to the content of a received electronic message and to generate at least one result based on the application of said at least one classification rule (*AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22*); a classification module co-operable with the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine and arranged to classify the electronic message into at least one message category based on said at least one result (*AS page 9, line 28-page 10, line 6; page 12, lines 20-25; and Fig. 2*), wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets (*Fig. 3*), said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure (*AS page 14, line 26-page 15, line 2; and Fig. 3*), the classification module being arranged to cause the at least one text

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analyzer in association with the associated rule engine to apply at least one of said rule sets to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure (AS page 16, lines 9-28; and Fig. 3) wherein the at least one result generated by application of a rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content determines at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to said message content (AS page 15, lines 2-26; and Fig. 3).

Claim 9

Claim 9 recites, in an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages (AS page 8, lines 21-24; and Figs. 1 and 2), the system comprising means for storing a plurality of classification rules (AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22; and page 17, lines 21-26); at least one text analyzer (AS page 9, line 28-page 10, line 6; and Fig. 2); a respective rule engine associated the at least one text analyzer and with the rule storage means (AS page 12, lines 27-32), the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine being co-operable to apply at least one classification rule to the content of a received electronic message and to generate at least one result based on the application of said at least one classification rule (AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22); and a classification module co-operable with the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine and arranged to classify the electronic message into at least one message category based on said at least one result (AS page 9, line 28-page 10, line 6; page 12, lines 20-25; and Fig. 2), a method of classifying an electronic message (Fig. 5) comprising: arranging the classification rules into a plurality of rule sets (Fig. 3), said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure (AS page 14, line 26-page 15, line 2; and Fig. 3); causing the at least one text analyzer, in association with the associated rule engine, to apply at least one of said rule sets to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure (AS page 16, lines 9-28; and Fig. 3); and determining at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to said message content depending on the at least one result generated by application of the preceding rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content (AS page 15, lines 2-26; and Fig. 3).

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Claim 14

Independent claim 14 recites an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages (*AS page 8, lines 21-24; and Figs. 1 and 2*), the system comprising: means for storing a plurality of classification rules (*AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22; and page 17, lines 21-26*); a classification module arranged to cause at least one classification rule to be applied to the content of a received electronic message to generate at least one result (*AS page 9, line 28-page 10, line 6; page 12, line 20- page 13, line 22;and Fig. 2*), wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets (*Fig. 3*), said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure (*AS page 14, line 26- page 15, line 2; and Fig. 3*), the classification module being arranged to cause at least one of said rule sets to be applied to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure (*AS page 16, lines 9-28; and Fig. 3*) wherein the at least one result generated by application of a rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content determines at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to the message content (*AS page 15, lines 2-26; and Fig. 3*).

Claim 16

Independent claim 16 recites, in an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages (*AS page 8, lines 21-24; and Figs. 1 and 2*), the system comprising: means for storing a plurality of classification rules (*AS page 12, line 27- page 13, line 22; and page 17, lines 21-26*); a classification module arranged to cause at least one classification rule to be applied to the content of a received electronic message to generate at least one result (*AS page 9, line 28- page 10, line 6; page 12, line 20- page 13, line 22;and Fig. 2*), wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets (*Fig. 3*), said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure (*AS page 14, line 26-page 15, line 2; and Fig. 3*), a method of classifying an electronic message (*Fig. 5*) comprising: causing at least one of said rule sets to be applied to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure (*AS page 16, lines 9-28; and Fig. 3*); and determining at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to the message content depending on the at least one

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result generated by application of the preceding rule set of said plurality of rule sets to the message content (AS page 15, lines 2-26; and Fig. 3).

VI. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

Claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,424,997 to Buskirk Jr. et al. (Buskirk) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,832,470 to Morita et al. (Morita).

VII. ARGUMENT

A. ARGUMENT SUMMARY

APPELLANT'S INVENTION AS RECITED IN CLAIMS 1-7, 9-14 and 16 IS PATENTABLE OVER THE DISCLOSURES OF BUSKIRK AND MORITA BECAUSE NEITHER BUSKIRK, MORITA, NOR THEIR COMBINATION DISCLOSE 1) "THE CLASSIFICATION RULES ARE ARRANGED INTO A PLURALITY OF RULE SETS, SAID RULE SETS BEING ASSOCIATED WITH ONE ANOTHER IN ACCORDANCE WITH A HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE" OR 2) " THE CLASSIFICATION MODULE BEING ARRANGED TO CAUSE THE AT LEAST ONE TEXT ANALYZER ... TO APPLY AT LEAST ONE OF SAID RULE SETS TO THE MESSAGE CONTENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SAID HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE WHEREIN THE AT LEAST ONE RESULT GENERATED BY APPLICATION OF A RULE SET FROM SAID PLURALITY OF RULE SETS TO THE MESSAGE CONTENT DETERMINES AT LEAST ONE OTHER RULE SET FROM SAID PLURALITY OF RULE SETS NEXT TO BE APPLIED TO SAID MESSAGE CONTENT," AS REQUIRED BY CLAIM 1. CLAIMS 9, 14 AND 16 INCLUDE SIMILAR RECITATIONS.

The remaining claims depend from the independent claims and are not subject to rejection for at least the same reasons.

B. ISSUES

Claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of the disclosures of Buskirk and Morita. There are no other rejections and no other applied references. The issue on appeal is whether the combination of Buskirk and Morita renders Appellant's invention obvious.

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C. LEGAL STANDARD*Obviousness under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)*

Conditions for patentability; non-obvious subject matter.

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made... 35 U.S.C. §103 (2007)

Appellant challenges the rejections in the Office Action based on Buskirk and Morita because Buskirk fails to disclose every limitation of pending independent claims 1, 9, 14 and 16 and Morita fails to make up for the deficiencies of Buskirk. That is, the Appellant's pending claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 recite at least one feature that is not taught by Buskirk, Morita or their combination and the addition of that feature would not be obvious. Therefore, the Examiner's rejection of Appellant's pending claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is in error.

D. APPELLANT'S INVENTION, AS RECITED IN CLAIMS 1-7, 9-14 AND 16 IS NOT OBVIOUS OVER THE DISCLOSURES OF BUSKIRK AND MORITA BECAUSE NEITHER BUSKIRK NOR MORITA TAKEN SINGULARLY OR IN ANY PROPER COMBINATION DISCLOSES OR SUGGESTS; 1) "THE CLASSIFICATION RULES ARE ARRANGED INTO A PLURALITY OF RULE SETS, SAID RULE SETS BEING ASSOCIATED WITH ONE ANOTHER IN ACCORDANCE WITH A HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE" OR 2) " THE CLASSIFICATION MODULE BEING ARRANGED TO CAUSE THE AT LEAST ONE TEXT ANALYZER ... TO APPLY AT LEAST ONE OF SAID RULE SETS TO THE MESSAGE CONTENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SAID HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE WHEREIN THE AT LEAST ONE RESULT GENERATED BY APPLICATION OF A RULE SET FROM SAID PLURALITY OF RULE SETS TO THE MESSAGE CONTENT DETERMINES AT LEAST ONE OTHER RULE SET FROM SAID PLURALITY OF RULE SETS NEXT TO BE APPLIED TO SAID MESSAGE CONTENT," AS RECITED IN CLAIM 1 OR THE SIMILAR RECITATIONS IN CLAIMS 9, 14 AND 16, EITHER LITERALLY OR INHERENTLY.

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Buskirk was initially cited in the First Office Action mailed July 30, 2004. Morita was initially cited in the Eighth Office Action mailed November 14, 2008. Buskirk was cited in the sixth Office Action mailed June 4, 2007 as teaching "wherein at least one result generated by application of the at least one rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content determines at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to said message content." Appellant notes that, in the Seventh Office Action mailed May 28, 2008, claims 1-7, 9-14 and 16 were allowed. Morita was subsequently cited in the eighth Office Action mailed November 14, 2008 as teaching "applying rules to message content in accordance with a hierarchical structure."

Appellant respectfully disagrees that the combination of Buskirk and Morita disclose or suggest:

1) classification rules arranged into a **plurality of rule sets**, where **the rule sets are associated with one another** in accordance with a **hierarchical structure** or

2) a classification module arranged to cause at least one text analyzer **to apply at least one of the rule sets** to the message content **in accordance with the hierarchical structure**, wherein **at least one result generated by application of a rule set** from the rule sets to the message content **determines at least one other rule set from the rule sets next to be applied** to the message content,

as required by claim 1 (emphasis added). Claims 9, 14, and 16 include similar recitations.

Buskirk concerns an electronic messaging system that includes a classifier and an action selector. As shown in Fig. 2, Buskirk includes a rule applier 120 as a part of the classifier 101. The rule applier 120 is coupled to receive classification rules 125.

In the eighth Office Action mailed November 14, 2008, it is asserted that Buskirk discloses "wherein the at least one result generated by the application of the at least one rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content

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determines at least one other rule set from the plurality of rule sets next to be applied to the message content." Appellant respectfully disagrees with this assertion. The rule applier 120 of Buskirk is described only at column 3, line 65 through column 4, line 18 and at column 5, lines 21-43. These passages do not indicate that the result of applying any rule set "determines at least one other rule set ... next to be applied" (emphasis added). The rules applier is described as receiving a vector of features and providing class labels and confidence levels to the action selector module. The processing performed by the rule applier at column 5, lines 21-43 is described as follows:

The extracted data is then provided in a vector format, such as a feature count table and further reduced, if desired. The values of the feature vector may be in binary or numerical form, and may be provided in a simpler vector format (e.g., reduced) in order to use less disk space. The simple vector format may be provided in a feature (features occurring in different sections of the input are counted separately) and one line for each input document. Each cell in the feature count table may contain several different counts for the feature (absolute count plus several relative counts), and is designed to be as information rich as possible so that various runs using different counting, weighting or filtering strategies do not have to revisit the input text. The output of this feature is a table with vectors suitable as input for a chosen machine learning program.

The vector data may then be submitted to a machine learning module (not shown) where an algorithm is applied to the data. Alternatively, the rule may be derived by manual analysis, manual modification of machine generated rules or a combination of the above. Testing provides a precision, recall, accuracy or other statistic analysis of the tested data. The output of the learning module is a set of classification rules 126 (FIG. 2).

The processing described at column 5, lines 21-43, however, does not indicate that the application of any rules set determines at least one other rule set next to be applied.

It is admitted in the Office Action mailed November 14, 2008, furthermore, that Buskirk does not disclose or suggest "applying the one or more rule sets to the message content in accordance with a hierarchical structure." Accordingly, Buskirk can not disclose or suggest classification rule sets that are associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure.

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For the hierarchical application of the rules, the Office Action mailed November 14, 2008 cites Morita. Morita concerns a method and apparatus for classifying document information. In particular, the Office Action mailed November 14, 2008 cited Figs. 1, 2, 5; the Abstract; and column 21, line 63-column 22, line 35 of Morita. Appellant respectfully submits that none of these passages discloses classification rules that are arranged into a plurality of rule sets, said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure, as required by claim 1. Claims 9, 14 and 16 include similar recitations.

In Fig. 1, Morita discloses a document classification apparatus including a word detection unit 102 and a document classification unit 103. (Column 5, lines 44-49). Word detection unit 102 extracts words and synonyms from a document to produce key words. (Column 5, lines 66-column 6, line 14). Fig. 2 of Morita shows an example of key words 204 produced by word detection unit 102 which are stored in a key word group 205. (Column 6, lines 35-49).

Document classification unit 103 receives the key word groups and prepares a "hierarchical classification system." (Column 6, lines 25-30). In particular, document classification unit 103: a) performs a single key word classification process for clustering documents having key words included in the key word group and b) a related key word classification process for integrating sets of single key word folders including similar document groups. (Column 6, line 50-column 7, line 8 and Fig. 3). Fig. 5 of Morita shows a key word table 501 for managing key words used in the single key word classification process by document classification unit 103 (column 7, lines 10-55).

There is no indication in Morita that the key word classification process and the "hierarchical classification system" represent classification rules arranged into a plurality of rule sets, where the rule sets are associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure, as required by claims 1, 9, 14 and 16. The "hierarchical classification" of Morita relates to document classification, not to rule sets. Furthermore, there is no indication in Morita that the result of applying a rule set determines at least one other rule set next to the applied, as required by claims 1, 9, 14 and 16.

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The Abstract of Morita describes a document information classification method and apparatus for classifying a document group and arranging a classified result "hierarchically" on the basis of key words given to the document group and words appearing in documents without dependence on a prescribed classification system. As described, the apparatus determines key words from documents, in order to classify the documents into folders on the basis of the individual key words and to integrate folders having similar document groups. Morita does not disclose or suggest any multiple hierarchically arranged rule sets, where the result of applying a rule set determines at least one other rule set next to be applied, as required by claims 1, 9, 14 and 16.

Morita, at column 21, line 63-column 22, line 35, describes an example of how a document classification apparatus 2200 prepares a classification system of three "hierarchies" and five kinds of item levels. In particular, Morita teaches "rules for preparing the hierarchical construction information." It is noted that the reference in Morita is to "hierarchical classification system," "hierarchical construction rules," and "hierarchical construction information" and not to hierarchical rule sets, as required by claims 1, 9, 14 and 16. The "hierarchical classification" of Morita relates to document classification, not to rule sets. Morita does not teach multiple hierarchical rule sets that are used to classify messages and in which the result of applying one rule set determines at least one other rule set next to be applied to the message content, as required by claim 1. Claims 9, 14 and 16 include similar recitations. Thus, Morita does not supply the deficiencies of Buskirk. Accordingly, the rejection is improper.

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, claims 1, 9, 14 and 16 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Buskirk and Morita. Claims 2-7 and 11-13 depend from claim 1 and claim 10 depends from claim 9. Accordingly, these claims are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Buskirk and Morita for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 9.

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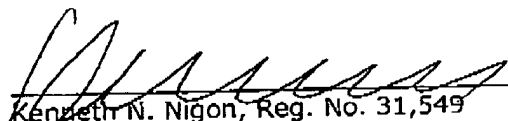
CONCLUSION

Appellant has advanced one reason demonstrating that the disclosures of Buskirk combined with Morita are insufficient as a basis for an obviousness rejection of the pending claims. Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request the Board's reversal of this rejection.

Respectfully submitted,

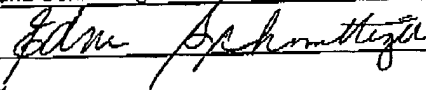
January 26, 2009

Date


Kenneth N. Nigon, Reg. No. 31,549
Deborah M. Grove, Reg. No. 61,091
Attorney for Applicant

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VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (Previously Presented) An electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages, the system comprising:

means for storing a plurality of classification rules;

at least one text analyzer;

a respective rule engine associated with the at least one text analyzer and with the rule storage means,

the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine being co-operable to apply at least one classification rule to the content of a received electronic message and to generate at least one result based on the application of said at least one classification rule;

a classification module co-operable with the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine and arranged to classify the electronic message into at least one message category based on said at least one result,

wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets, said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure, the classification module being arranged to cause the at least one text analyzer in association with the associated rule engine to apply at least one of said rule sets to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure wherein the at least one result generated by application of a rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content determines at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to said message content.

2. (Previously Presented) An electronic message processing system as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine are arranged to generate a respective result set for the at least one rule set applied to the message content, the classification module being arranged to determine respectively from the at least one result of the at least one rule set whether to classify the message in a category or to cause a further rule set to be applied to the message content.

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3. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the a text analyzer includes the rule engine.

4. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 3, wherein the classification module is arranged to instantiate a respective instance of the text analyzer for each rule set, each text analyzer instance being arranged to apply its respective rule set to the message content.

5. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 4, wherein each text analyzer instance is associated with a respective lexical analysis tool.

6. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 5, wherein the lexical analysis tool includes a dictionary.

7. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rule storage means comprises a plurality of rule files, each rule file containing a respective rule set.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) In an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages, the system comprising means for storing a plurality of classification rules; at least one text analyzer; a respective rule engine associated the at least one text analyzer and with the rule storage means, the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine being co-operable to apply at least one classification rule to the content of a received electronic message and to generate at least one result based on the application of said at least one classification rule; and a classification module co-operable with the at least one text analyzer and associated rule engine and arranged to classify the electronic message into at least one message category based on said at least one result, a method of classifying an electronic message comprising:

arranging the classification rules into a plurality of rule sets, said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure;

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causing the at least one text analyzer, in association with the associated rule engine, to apply at least one of said rule sets to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure; and

determining at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to said message content depending on the at least one result generated by application of the preceding rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content.

10. (Original) A method of classifying an electronic message as claimed in claim 9, further including:

instantiating a respective instance of the text analyzer for each rule set; and

arranging each text analyzer instance to apply its respective rule set to the message content.

11. (Original) An electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the electronic messages to be processed include unstructured text-based messages.

12. (Original) An electronic mail (e-mail) processing system comprising an electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 1.

13. (Original) An SMS message processing system comprising an electronic message processing system as claimed in claim 1.

14. (Previously Presented) An electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages, the system comprising:

means for storing a plurality of classification rules;

a classification module arranged to cause at least one classification rule to be applied to the content of a received electronic message to generate at least one result,

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wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets, said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure, the classification module being arranged to cause at least one of said rule sets to be applied to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure wherein the at least one result generated by application of a rule set from said plurality of rule sets to the message content determines at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to the message content.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) In an electronic message processing system arranged to receive electronic messages, the system comprising: means for storing a plurality of classification rules;

a classification module arranged to cause at least one classification rule to be applied to the content of a received electronic message to generate at least one result, wherein the classification rules are arranged into a plurality of rule sets, said rule sets being associated with one another in accordance with a hierarchical structure, a method of classifying an electronic message comprising:

causing at least one of said rule sets to be applied to the message content in accordance with said hierarchical structure; and

determining at least one other rule set from said plurality of rule sets next to be applied to the message content depending on the at least one result generated by application of the preceding rule set of said plurality of rule sets to the message content.

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IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None

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X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None